

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11

SAA-01 SES-02 IO-13 TRSE-00 OMB-01 ACDA-12 /093 W

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R 310730Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9328

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAN BAD

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 6177

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PEPR, PGOV, AF, PK

SUBJECT: TARAKI INTERVIEW WITH PAKISTANI CORRESPONDENT

CONTAINS LITTLE STARTLINGLY NEW

REF: KABUL 6031

1. SUMMARY. IN A FAIRLY STANDARD INTERVIEW WITH A PAKISTANI CORRESPONDENT MUJAHID ALI, WHOSE PUBLICATION WAS NOT IDENTIFIED (CARRIED IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED PRESS JULY 29), CHAIRMAN OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL NOOR MOHAMMAD TARAKI WAS UPBEAT (UNJUSTIFIABLY, IN OUR VIEW) REGARDING THE DOMESTIC SECURITY SITUATION, DID NOT RULE OUT THE PROMULGATION OF A NEW CONSTITUTION, HINTED THAT AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES MAY BE A PART OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ULTIMATE LAND REFORM PROGRAM, AND REITERATED THAT THE POLITICAL DIFFERENCE WITH PAKISTAN WOULD HAVE TO BE SOLVED THROUGH PEACEFUL NEGOTIATIONS. THE FREQUENCY AT WHICH QZARAKI IS GRANTING INTERVIEWS WITH FOREIGN JOURNALISTS IS IMPRESSIVE, ESPECIALLY IN CONTRAST WITH HIS PREDECESSOR, AND SUGGESTS THAT THE REGIME WANTS TO ENSURE THAT ITS OWN LINE ON ISSUES IS READILY AVAILABLE TO INTERESTED

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OBSERVERS. END OF SUMMARY.

2. TARAKI'S LATEST PRESS INTERVIEW ESSENTIALLY COVERS FAMILIAR GROUND, ALTHOUGH THERE WERE A FEW INTERESTING NUGGETS. REGARDING INTERNAL SECURITY, TARAKI ASSERTED THAT THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN (DRA) HAD "FULL CONTROL

OF THE SITUATION, AND COMPLETE ORDER PREVAILS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY." HE STATED THAT THE "PREPARATION AND ENFORCEMENT" OF A NEW "PEOPLE'S CONSTITUTION" WILL TAKE PLACE IN AN "APPROPRIATE TIME." AS FOR LAND REFORM, HE SAID THAT THE QUESTION THE REGIME IS CURRENTLY STUDYING IS WHETHER TO DISTRIBUTE LAND AMONG THE PEASANTS OR TO FORM AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES. ON FOREIGN POLICY, TARAKI POINTED OUT THAT THE POLITICAL DIFFERENCE WITH PAKISTAN "REMAINS UNSOLVED," AND THAT HE HOPED THE DIFFERENCE WILL BE SOLVED THROUGH "PEACEFUL NEGOTIATIONS."

3. COMMENT: THE INTERVIEW, EVEN THOUGH IT WAS CONDUCTED BY WHAT WAS APPARENTLY A VERY SYMPATHETIC CORRESPONDENT, WAS MORE DEVOID OF SUBSTANCE THAN OTHER SIMILAR SESSIONS RECENTLY. TARAKI MAY HAVE FELT THAT HE HAD MADE HIS POINTS WITH AN IRANIAN CORRESPONDENT JUST A FEW DAYS AGO (REFTEL), AND DECIDED TO HOLD HIS FIRE ON THIS OCCASION. NEVERTHELESS, HIS COMMENTS REGARDING THE DOMESTIC SECURITY SITUATION STRIKE US AS MORE OPTIMISTIC THAN THE FACTS AND THE MOOD OF THE AFGHAN PEOPLE WOULD WARRANT.

4. THE PACE AT WHICH TARAKI AND OTHER MEMBERS OF
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THE DRA LEADERSHIP PLACE THEIR POSITIONS BEFORE THE PUBLIC IS IMPRESSIVE, ESPECIALLY WHEN COMPARED TO PRESIDENT DAOUD WHO USED TO GRANT ABOUT HALF A DOZEN SUCH INTERVIEWS ANNUALLY.
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